

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in reply to the Office Action dated July 30, 2008. Claims 1 to 8, 11, 12, 18, 19, 22 to 24, 33, 36, 38, 41, 43, and 44 have been amended for clarification purposes. New claim 47 has been added. Claims 17 and 26 have been cancelled. Claims 9, 10, 14, 15, 27, 28, and 30 stand cancelled. No new matter is added by these amendments or the new claim. A Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement is submitted herewith. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge deposit account 02-1818 for any fees due in connection with the Supplemental IDS and this Response.

The Office Action rejected claims 1 to 8, 11 to 13, 16 to 26, 29, and 31 to 46 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0181234 to Falciglia, SR. ("Falciglia") in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0073480 to Thomas et al. ("Thomas"). Applicant respectfully disagrees with this rejection. For the purpose of advancing prosecution, Applicant has amended certain of the claims to overcome the rejection.

Amended independent claim 1 is directed to a gaming device including, among other elements, a plurality of instructions which, when executed by at least one processor, cause the at least one processor to operate with at least one display device to: display a plurality of masked selections, each masked selection masking one of a plurality of symbols, display a plurality of random symbol generators, wherein each of the random symbol generators is associated with a different group of masked selections from the plurality of masked selections, enable a player to pick one of the plurality of masked selections, the masked selection picked by the player masking a first symbol, cause a number of generations by each of the random symbol generators, for each generation by each of the random symbol generators, determine whether the first symbol is generated, if the first symbol is generated for any of the generations by any of the random symbol generators, reveal the masked selection associated with the first symbol, and cause an additional second award to be provided, the additional second award being based on whether the first symbol is generated for the play of the game,

the additional second award being determined based on an outcome of a bonus event, the bonus event occurring after a first generation by each of the random symbol generators and before a second generation by each of the random symbol generators.

Applicant respectfully submits that neither Falciglia or Thomas alone, nor the gaming device resulting from the combination of Falciglia and Thomas, discloses a set of instructions which cause at least one processor to cause an additional second award to be provided, the additional second award being determined based on an outcome of a bonus event, the bonus event occurring after a first generation by each of the random symbol generators and before a second generation by each of the random symbol generators, as in amended independent claim 1. Applicant further submits that it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Falciglia in view of Thomas to result in the gaming device of amended independent claim 1. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentably distinguished over Falciglia in view of Thomas and is in condition for allowance.

Dependent claims 2 to 8, 11 to 13, 16, and 18, which depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 1, are also allowable for the reasons given above with respect to independent claim 1, and because of the additional features recited in these claims.

Amended independent claims 19 and 33 each include certain similar elements to claim 1 with respect to determining a second or bonus award after a first generation of at least one symbol but before a second generation of at least one symbol. For reasons similar to those given above with respect to claim 1, and because of the additional features recited in independent claims 19 and 33, Applicant submits that independent claims 19 and 33 are patentably distinguished over Falciglia in view of Thomas and are in condition for allowance.

Dependent claims 20 to 25, 29, 31, 32, and 34 to 40, which depend directly or indirectly from independent claims 19 or 33, are also allowable for the reasons given above with respect to independent claims 19 and 33, and because of the additional elements recited in these claims.

Amended independent claim 41 is directed to a method of operating a gaming device including, amongst other elements, enabling a different play of a second bonus

game for each of a plurality of selectable regions picked by a player which is generated in the matching sequence, wherein at least one play of the second bonus game occurs after a first selectable region picked by the player is generated in the matching sequence and before a second selectable region picked by the player is generated in the matching sequence, and providing an award based the outcome of each different play of the second bonus game. Applicant submits that neither Falciglia or Thomas alone, nor the method of operating a gaming device resulting from the combination of Falciglia and Thomas, discloses enabling a different play of a second bonus game for each of a plurality of selectable regions picked by a player which is generated in the matching sequence, wherein at least one play of the second bonus game occurs after a first selectable region picked by the player is generated in the matching sequence and before a second selectable region picked by the player is generated in the matching sequence, and providing an award based the outcome of each different play of the second bonus game. Moreover, it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the method resulting from the combination of Falciglia and Thomas to result in such a gaming device. Thus, Applicant submits that amended independent claim 41 is patentably distinguished over Falciglia in view of Thomas and is in condition for allowance.

Dependent claims 42 to 46, which depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 41, are also allowable for the reasons given above with respect to independent claim 41, and because of the additional features recited in these claims.

New claim 47 depends directly from independent claim 41 and is allowable for the reasons given above with respect to independent claim 41 and because of the additional features recited in this claim.

An earnest endeavor has been made to place this application in condition for formal allowance and in the absence of more pertinent art, such allowance is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this Response, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

BELL, BOYD & LLOYD LLP

BY



Adam H. Masia
Reg. No. 35,602
Cust. No. 29159
(312) 807-4284

Dated: October 30, 2008